

Leadership Recommendations for KBE Priorities 2005-06

Priority. It is clear that leadership, both in the person of the principal and the leadership of other educators in the building, is the foundation of school improvement and reaching proficiency.

It is a very realistic goal for all of Kentucky's 1250 schools to have leadership that ensures the learning and wellbeing of all students.

Without strong leaders high schools will not improve, too many students will still leave third grade not reading on level, and achievement gaps will not close; therefore, three of the Board's priorities are dependent upon the leadership priority.

Current Status. There are far more educators *certified* to be principals than Kentucky needs; there are far too few qualified.

There are plenty of teachers leading or ready to lead; conditions in schools too often don't allow them, and rewards, (financial and professional) are not there to support them.

Educators are "going through" leadership programs, but there is too little quality control.

In low-performing schools especially, weak leadership is allowed to persist, in spite of declining test scores and stifling of student potential.

Research has defined educational leadership rather clearly at this point. It also has established school culture as the first condition that a leader must nurture in order to move a school forward. Succinctly stated, what needs to be done is known.

Next Level. Primarily because of the initiatives supported by the State Action for Educational Leadership (SAELP) grant funded by the Wallace Foundation, Kentucky is poised to make breakthroughs in building and teacher leadership.

Colleges of education are collaborating with each other to revamp their educational administration programs. They are looking forward to partnering with local districts and KDE to provide programs that produce leaders that schools and districts need. In its infancy, this initiative is full of promise as these institutions realize that they must serve their customers in order to play their role in high-stakes accountability.

In 5 pilot districts funded by the SAELP grant, exciting experiments in teacher leadership are revealing ways that teacher leadership can grow across the state. Also, KDE's Differentiated Compensation Pilot Project is showing positive early results.

Kentucky Board of Education Role

The task of identifying and developing leaders of the quality that guarantees proficiency by 2014 is one that will require the collaboration of many partners. KBE can help promote this partnership among universities, EPSB, CPE, and others.

KBE can also play a leading role in keeping educational leadership front and center in the public's awareness. All other educational initiatives and concerns are in jeopardy if leadership is lacking.